

THE RAVESTIJN GALLERY

PRESENTS AT

UNSEEN 2023



Mathieu Asselin / *Undefined Landscape Mercedes Class-V & Y9/1 - Riverblau Met. - Volkswagen*, 2023
Folded steel plates with waterborne car spray paint, silkscreen printed with carbon negative ink, lacquer finish
100 x 150 x 2 cm / Edition of 1 plus 1 Artists Proof

Press Release Unseen 2023

Opening: Thursday 21 September 14:00 - 22:00, by invitation only
Fair: Friday 22 September 11:00 - 21:00
Saturday 23 September 11:00 - 19:00
Sunday 24 September 11:00 - 19:00

The Ravestijn Gallery is proud to present the premiere of *True Colors* by Mathieu Asselin at UNSEEN 2023. The work is influenced by the Dieseltgate scandal and reflects on the automobile industry's destructive relationship with the environment.

In 2014, a hidden software was discovered in certain models of Volkswagen cars. This software manipulated air pollution tests conducted on vehicles from specific automakers. It was designed to identify when the standardized emissions test was being carried out and then modify the engine to emit lower levels of pollutants during the test. However, when these vehicles were driven under real-world conditions, they emitted significantly higher amounts of pollutants. This revelation caused the largest industrial scandal since World War II and severely shook the automobile industry. This scandal came to be known as Dieseltgate.

True Colors, Mathieu Asselin's latest body of work, is influenced by the Dieseltgate scandal and reflects on the automobile industry's destructive relationship with the environment. The project examines how the industry falsely portrays itself as eco-friendly to navigate the urgent socioeconomic and environmental challenges confronting humanity today. It highlights how the traditional concept of individualistic mobility is being questioned like never before in the history of the industry.

Through the utilization of visual marketing tools employed by the industry, such as photography, colors, archival materials, and others, *True Colors* aims to challenge the industry's environmental narrative. It confronts the industry's contradictions, corporate and environmental scandals, lack of action, and its unsustainable vision for the future of human mobility.

The project consists of two main components: a book containing photographs and text that delve into the project's research, and a series of diptychs: landscapes printed using silk-screen technique. These landscapes are printed on high gloss colored steel plates, measuring around 100 x 150 x 2 cm, using black carbon-negative ink. The ink is produced from fine dust extracted from the exhaust pipes of Diesel vehicles.

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Chloe Sells / *Green Heart Medicine King*, 2020
Framed chromogenic print with acrylic paint
51,5 x 38 cm / Unique piece

The overall presentation of the work is serene and comprises a colorful collection of picturesque natural scenes. Landscapes that were appropriated from the sales brochures of the cars involved in the Dieselgate scandal. The colors used in the prints incidentally bear the names of precious ecosystems. For example, a lake surrounded by pine trees is depicted in Volkswagen's 'Montana Green,' a pristine mountaintop is covered in Renault's 'Glacier Blue,' and a desert is bathed in BMW's 'Arizona Sun.'

In collaboration with a biologist, Asselin selected 257 of these colors and created a graphic representation illustrating the rising temperatures from 1880 to 2022. Colors such as 'Alaska Blue' represent the Victorian Age, while 'Amazonia Green' represents the mid-20th century. The more alarming 'Coral Red' signifies the present day..

Next to Mathieu Asselin we will be presenting works by Chloe Sells. Chloe presents a selection of work from her time as one of the last personal assistants to the celebrated cult journalist, Hunter S. Thompson, author of *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas: a savage journey to the heart of the American dream* (1971) and other writings on American politics and life.

Sells draws upon this experience to not only depict the intimate home and lifestyle of the author but to also revel in the powerful landscapes of their shared home, Aspen, Colorado. In an expressive series of images the artist combines documentary works and hand-printed photographs that are overlaid with traditional marbling techniques from Italy and Japan. The result is a series of unique tableaux, as much paintings as photographs: a psychedelic ride through the Rocky Mountains and into the living room of one of the most unconventional minds of the 20th century.

For more information about the artists, or to receive images, please contact the gallery at jasper@theravestijngallery.com. Likewise, please visit the website [here!](https://www.theravestijngallery.com)

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